

SWAFFHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

together with the

REPORT

of the

SANITARY INSPECTOR

1952

STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health.....Robert N.C. McCurdy, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector.....Charles Frobisher, M.I.Mun.E., A.M.I.Struct.E.,
F.Inst.H.E., C.R.S.I.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	...	7592
Population (estimated at mid-year by Registrar General)	...	...	...	...	...	3,006
Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	...	...	1,105
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£13,677.0.0.
Product of 1d. Rate...		...	...	...	...	£51. 17. 6.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the sanitary circumstances, health and vital statistics of your District for the year 1952.

The birth rate, which was already below the average for the whole country, has fallen further and now at 11.9 is almost as low as it has ever been. At the same time the death rate has fallen, although it is still above the national rate.

Epidemics of measles and scarlet fever occurred during the year, but in neither did they assume alarming proportions.

The case of Poliomyelitis notified, the first during the past five years, was confirmed and paralytic.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.

Section 47. Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention.

The provisions of this Section are "for the purposes of securing the necessary care and attention for persons who are suffering from grave chronic disease or, being aged, infirm or physically incapacitated are living in insanitary conditions, and are unable to devote to themselves and are not receiving from other persons, proper care and attention."

The Section goes on to explain that, if the Medical Officer of Health is satisfied that in the interests of any such person it is necessary to remove them, the Local Authority may apply for a Court Order to do so.

A number of cases involving aged persons have arisen where action might have been taken under this Section. I have not thought fit to recommend you to take such action, because I think there is a tendency to regard the interests of old people from too narrow an angle.

The situation has usually been that of an old person living alone in insanitary conditions. I have always adopted the principle that if such a person is of sound mind, then they have a right to choose their place of abode, even if their choice may be somewhat to the detriment of their physical health, provided that they are not endangering the health of other persons.

The simple truth is often overlooked, that there is no place like home. Home is what you are used to, however humble it may be. An old person has little else than memories to live for and these are nearly all associated with home.

The greater the physical disabilities of an old person, the more is this true. If they cannot get about they have around them those things which, and those people who, interest them most. If they are blind they know their way about by the familiar objects whose feel they have come to know.

I can see no justification for trying to fit the elderly against their will into new and unfamiliar, albeit more hygienic, surroundings even if, which is doubtful, their lives might be prolonged a little thereby.

MILK & DAIRIES REGULATIONS, 1949, REGULATION 20.

No action was taken during the year under this Regulation.

FOOD POISONING OUTBREAKS.

No cases of food poisoning were notified during the year.

MEDICAL STATISTICS

<u>BIRTHS</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
LIVE BIRTHS	21	15	36
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
STILLBIRTHS	0	0	0

POPULATION AT MID-YEAR, BIRTHS, BIRTHRATE, STILLBIRTHS, STILLBIRTH RATES, DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Population	2,822	3,024	3,048	2,923	3,006
Births (total)	45	34	40	42	36
Birthrate per 1,000 of population	15.9	11.3	13.1	14.4	11.9
Stillbirths	0	0	1	2	0
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 of population	0	0	0.33	0.68	0
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total births	0	0	24.4	45.4	0

DEATHS

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
ALL AGES	17	20	37
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
INFANTS under 1 year	2	0	2

CAUSES OF DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR

Cause	Male	Female	Total
Prematurity	1	0	1
Congenital heart disease	1	0	1
	2	0	2

POPULATION AT MID-YEAR, DEATHS, DEATHRATE, INFANT DEATHS, INFANT MORTALITY RATE, DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Population	2,822	3,024	3,048	2,923	3,006
Deaths	28	45	34	47	37
Deathrate per 1,000 of population	9.9	14.9	11.2	16.1	12.3
Infant Deaths	0	3	2	1	2
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	0	88	50	23.8	55.6

DEATHS FROM CERTAIN SELECTED CAUSES DURING THE PAST
FIVE YEARS.

Cause	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Tuberculosis	1	1	0	0	1
Bronchitis and Pneumonia	1	5	1	6	4
Other notifiable infectious diseases	0	0	0	0	0
Motor vehicle and other accidents	1	0	2	1	1
Pregnancy, childbirth and abortion	0	0	0	0	0
Cancer	5	3	10	10	2

DEATHS ACCORDING TO AGES (compiled from returns submitted
by the District Registrar).

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
Under 1 year	2	0	2
1 and under 5	0	0	0
5 " " 10	0	0	0
10 " " 20	0	0	0
20 " " 30	0	1	1
30 " " 40	0	0	0
40 " " 50	0	0	0
50 " " 60	0	3	3
60 " " 70	7	1	8
70 " " 80	4	6	10
80 " " 90	4	7	11
90 and over	0	2	2
Totals	17	20	37

CAUSES OF DEATH AT AGES ABOVE 1 YEAR AND BELOW 50.

Age Group	Sex	Cause
20 to 30	Female	Congenital cerebral diplegia

DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES (Registrar General's Short
List.)

List No.	Cause	Male	Female	Total
1	Tuberculosis, respiratory	1	0	1
2	Tuberculosis, other	0	0	0
3	Syphilitic disease	0	0	0
4	Diphtheria	0	0	0
5	Whooping cough	0	0	0
6	Meningococcal infections	0	0	0
7	Acute poliomyelitis	0	0	0
8	Measles	0	0	0
9	Other infective and parasitic diseases	0	0	0
10	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	0	0	0
11	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	0	0	0
12	Malignant neoplasm, breast	0	0	0
13	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	0	0	0
14	Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms	1	1	2
15	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	0	0	0
16	Diabetes	0	0	0
17	Vascular lesions of nervous system	2	5	7
18	Coronary disease, angina	4	0	4
19	Hypertension with heart disease	0	0	0
20	Other heart disease	1	6	7
21	Other circulatory disease	0	3	3
22	Influenza	0	0	0
23	Pneumonia	3	0	3
24	Bronchitis	0	1	1
25	Other diseases of respiratory system	0	0	0
26	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	0	0	0
27	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	0	0	0
28	Nephritis and nephrosis	0	0	0
29	Hyperplasia of prostate	4	0	4
30	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	0	0
31	Congenital malformations	0	0	0
32	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	2	3
33	Motor vehicle accidents	0	0	0
34	All other accidents	0	1	1
35	Suicide	0	1	1
36	Homicide and operations of war	0	0	0
	All Causes	17	20	37

THE FOLLOWING TABLE COMPARES BIRTHRATES, DEATHRATES, ETC. OF
THIS DISTRICT WITH THOSE OF ENGLAND AND WALES AND OF THE
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF NORFOLK IN 1952

	England and Wales	Norfolk	Swaffham U.D.
Birthrate	15.3	15.0	11.9
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 of population	0.35	0.29	0.0
Deathrate	11.3	11.3	12.3
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	27.6	28.2	55.6
Tuberculosis deathrate per 1,000 of population	0.24	0.13	0.33
Tuberculosis case rate per 1,000 of population	—	0.83	0.33

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Tuberculosis, all sites	0	2	5	1	1
Scarlet fever	6	2	4	6	12
Whooping cough	28	2	1	13	1
Diphtheria	0	0	1	0	0
Erysipelas	0	1	0	0	0
Measles	10	2	131	3	54
Poliomyelitis	0	0	0	0	1
Pneumonia	2	0	0	9	1
Infectious jaundice	0	4	2	1	2

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED IN 1952, BY AGES

Disease	Under 1 year	1-5	5-10	10-15	15-25	25-45	45-65	Over 65	Total
Tuberculosis, all sites	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Scarlet fever	0	3	8	0	0	1	0	0	12
Whooping cough	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Measles	2	20	31	1	0	0	0	0	54
Poliomyelitis	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pneumonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Infectious jaundice	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED IN 1952 BY MONTH OF NOTIFICATION

Disease	Jan	Feb	Mch	Apl	May	June	Jly	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Tuberculosis, all sites	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Scarlet fever	0	1	0	1	0	1	3	3	0	0	0	3	12
Whooping cough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Measles	0	5	9	38	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	54
Poliomyelitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Pneumonia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Infectious jaundice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2

THE FOLLOWING TABLE SHOWS THE NUMBER OF CASES ON THE TUBERCULOSIS
REGISTER AT 31st. DECEMBER, 1952 COMPARED WITH 31st. DECEMBER, 1951

	Respiratory			Non-Respiratory			Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
31. 12. 51.	7	5	12	0	1	1	13
31. 12. 52.	6	5	11	0	1	1	12

I should like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council and my colleagues on the staff, for their continued support and help during the year.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,

ROBERT N.C. McCURDY.

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR YEAR 1952.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I herewith present my Annual Report for your information and consideration:-

BUILDING.

During the year the following houses were built and occupied:-

Council Houses.....	10
Private Houses.....	6
Total.....	<u>16</u>

The total number of properties owned and managed by the Council at the end of 1952 is as follows:-

Council Houses.....	250
Requisitioned Houses.....	1
Total.....	<u>251</u>

The total number of houses in the Urban area at the end of 1952 is 1,105, of which 250 are Council Houses, thus the Council own 23% of the houses in the area.

No grants were made during the year under the Housing Act, 1949 (Part II) whereby the Council are enabled to financially assist property owners to re-condition properties subject to rent restrictions where low rentals militate against adequate maintenance of cottage properties.

In my report for 1951 I dealt with this matter most fully and I consider that such report should be again considered, as it may be found that the loan charges for grant aid will be much less than loan charges for new houses (to re-house tenants of old houses) which may cost up to £1,500 each.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The Sewage Works reconstruction scheme is still deferred by reason of Government prevailing policy.

An attempt was made to extend and deepen some of the carriers during the year, but owing to the high water level predominating, the lack of pumping plant and a source to dispose of the pumped effluent, it was impossible to make any appreciable improvement at these works.

SEWERAGE.

The sewerage system is being maintained in a satisfactory condition, the flat areas cause some concern occasionally, particularly the Cley Road section.

About 26 years ago, I established an automatic flushing tank at the end of this section in Shoemaker's Lane, but for many years this unit has been redundant. This sewer is deep and flat, caters for the drainage of the north side of Theatre Street, Cley Road, part of Whitsands Road and all Council Houses at Orchard Place, Queen Street, King Street etc.

I consider that the automatic flushing of this sewer should be renewed.

HOUSE REFUSE.

This service has been regularly maintained throughout the year without complaints.

NIGHTSOIL COLLECTION.

In my report for 1951 I recommended financial assistance to owners for conversion of pail closets, and I again suggest that this be considered.

I believe the Council could make a saving in the annual estimates by the adoption of my suggestion and the improvement of the sanitation of the district needs no explanation.

STREET SCAVENGING.

Street scavenging and cleansing of road gullies in the built up areas has been regularly maintained throughout the year. Swaffham compares favourably with other towns in East Anglia in this matter.

WATER SUPPLY.

An abundant supply of water is available at all times for the town, and analysis reports are satisfactory.

A new borehole is proposed for 1953 which will assure the maintenance of distribution and cater for the requirements of new houses, the new School and light industry.

HOUSING.

The new housing estate on Sayers Pasture was commenced during the year and the access road laid out.

This estate when completed, and if carried through to Westacre Road, will accommodate 82 houses. Land is being acquired for a further instalment of such scheme and sewers and the water mains are designed accordingly.

The greatest need is for cheap bungalows for old people, this is difficult owing to heavy costs of siteworks, this may be overcome by acquisition of small sites fronting existing roads where the usual services are already available.

FACTORIES.

The factories and workshops in the Urban area are maintained in accordance with the Factory Acts, 1937-1948, and my complaints relative to sanitary conveniences, cleansing and general maintenance are complied with immediately so that notices (informal or statutory) are rarely required.

Some light industry is required in the town especially to cater for young people who otherwise have to seek employment outside the town.

FOOD.

No outbreaks of food poisoning occurred during the year.

Sampling of milk, ice-cream etc. was continued, regular inspection of food shops, dairies etc. showed that tradesmen and milk producers were alive to the necessity of clean handling and production, and no complaint was received under this heading during the year.

MEAT.

As Meat Inspector at the Ministry of Food Abattoir at Swaffham, the regular inspection, classification and condemnation of meat is carried out almost daily.

Slaughtering at this centre caters for the meat supply of approximately 12,000 people in the Urban and Rural areas. I give statistics at the end of this report.

GENERAL.

At the end of this report I give statistics of inspections relative to housing and sanitary matters for your information:-

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

Item	Description	Steers	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Total
1	Number killed	525	56	5	1,583	249	2,418
2	Number inspected	431	51	5	1,451	228	2,216
3	<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis:</u> Whole carcases condemned	8	4	1	15	17	45
4	Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	83	12	2	56	31	184
5	Percentage of the number inspected affected with a disease other than Tuberculosis	10	9	20	4	12	-
6	<u>Tuberculosis only:</u> Whole carcases condemned	5	4	-	-	-	9
7	Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	38	9	-	-	2	49
8	Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	11	25	-	-	1	-
9	Average number of animals slaughtered per week (less holidays)	10	1	-	32	5	48
10	Percentage examined by Meat Inspector	92	91	100	92	91	-

		Meat lbs.	Offal lbs.	Total
11	Condemned Meat and Offal as per paras 1 to 5 above	8,274	3,048	11,322
12	Ditto paras 6 to 10 (Tuberculous meat)	5,926	1,855	7,781
Total.....		14,200	4,903	19,103

(Under paras 1 to 5):-

1. 1. 52 to 18. 2. 52.
18. 2. 52 to 10. 6. 52.
10. 6. 52 to 15. 9. 52.
15. 9. 52 to 31.12. 52.

Total.....

1,023	779	1,802
1,589	737	2,326
2,332	921	3,253
3,330	611	3,941
8,274	3,048	11,322

Contd.

Under paras 6 to 10):-

1. 1. 52 to 18. 2. 52.

18. 2. 52 to 10. 6. 52.

10. 6. 52 to 15. 9. 52.

15. 9. 52 to 31.12. 52.

Total.....

Meat lbs.	Offal lbs.	Total
1,057	484	1,541
-	66	66
316	128	444
4,553	1,177	5,730
5,926	1,855	7,781

The above tables show approximate seasonal fluctuations of tubercular meat condemnations also the considerable amount of time necessarily devoted to meat inspection.

In all cases where owners have sent their veterinary Inspector to examine condemned meat, such Inspectors have fully confirmed all decisions made by me.

SHOP FOODSTUFFS CONDEMNED.

In the inspection of shops and with the co-operation of shopkeepers, I regularly examine food stocks and condemn (as necessary) such stocks and articles of food deemed suspicious by the shopkeepers as and when required.

The following list of goods examined and condemned in 1952 indicates the extent of work carried out, the number in brackets being number condemned:-

Milk (5)	Plums (15)	Shrimps (1)
Sardines (4)	Tomatoes (3)	Salmon (4)
Carrots (1)	Prunes (17)	Herrings (2)
Canned Grapes (6)	Apple Puree (1)	Cherries (3)
Fruit Salads (2)	Peaches (2)	Strawberries (1)
Marmalade (3)	Kidney Soup (1)	Tongue (3)
Minced Beef	Ham and Veal	Tinned Steaks (5)
Loaf (20)	Loaf (55)	
Luncheon Pork (3)	Miscellaneous (12)	

Non-tinned goods include one shoulder of ham, $12\frac{1}{2}$ lbs sausages, 20 lbs pork, 12 lbs meat, and $8\frac{1}{2}$ lbs fish.

No complaints were received of the supply of unsound meat, fish or other foods during the year.

The food on the market stalls (Saturday markets) received regular inspection, and the stallholders co-operated in the observance of the clean food regulations.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

A summary of the work done in the Sanitary Inspector's Department is tabulated below for the statistical use of the Medical Officer and for information of the Council:-

Item	Description	Inspections	Notices served	Nuisances abated or pending
1	Factories	14	-	-
2	Workshops	16	1	1
3	Bakehouses	8	-	-
	Carried forward	38	1	1

Item	Description	Inspections	Notices served	Nuisances abated or pending
	Brought forward	38	1	1
4	Foodshops	14	-	-
5	Cowsheds and Dairies	16	-	-
6	Obstruction of light and Ventilation (Public Health Act, 1936)	20	10	10 (2 pending)
7	Housing defects (Housing Act, 1936)	19	11	11
8	Middens and Ashbins (Public Health Act, 1936)	34	21	21 (2 pending)
9	Infectious Diseases	21	14	14 Fumigations
10	Rodent Control (Pests Act, 1949)	24	2	2
11	Dangerous Buildings	20	4	4 (4 pending)
12	Buildings Demolished	6	1	1
13	Tents, Vans, Sheds etc.	8	1	1
14	Water Supply	26	4	4
15	Drains and Soakaways	14	1	1
16	Pail Closets and Cesspools	17	2	2
17	Drainage of Premises, W.C's etc.	9	6	6
Total		286	78	78 (8 pending)

Notes:-

It will be noted that only 1 notice was necessary in above paras 1 to 5, all requirements verbally requested being executed immediately.

The remainder of the paras are normal and are approximately equal to those of other years.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,

CHARLES FROBISHER.

Sanitary Inspector.

